

THE SUPERNATURAL CHURCH!

24 March 2013, Dr Stephen Smith

ENVIRONMENT or CULTURE?

- Response to *Spiritual influence* creates *Atmosphere*.
- Atmosphere that is sustained creates *Climate*.
- Climate that is sustained creates *Strongholds*.
- Strongholds sustained determine *Culture*.

The fastest way to change or SHIFT, is simply to change your CULTURE.

We in the Body of Christ need to be alert to the world we are living in and the changes, which are happening around us. Unfortunately one of the weaknesses we encounter in the ministry today is that we don't always assess things correctly, and until we do, we are not going to come up with the right solution.

Isaiah 60:1-5 (Amplified)

The church needs to be "Evangelically potent, prophetically relevant, socially significant, and spiritually refreshed."

1. BECOME A PERSON OF INFLUENCE

We should be experts on impacting each other, and when this is not your prime focus, you become irrelevant to society. But when the church starts to have a reputation for giving and serving, we shall see the wealth of the Gentiles flow to us.

And if we don't impact and influence our community outside of our four walls, that community will eventually rise up and bite us.

The Church is responsible for changing communities by being the 'salt' and 'light'. This is our central theme as the Church of the 21st Century. What are our children going to inherit? The Church is here to serve our generation!

Why do we believe in prosperity? Without God's abundant provision, we cannot achieve anything.

God is also the God of the poor, and He has entrusted us with the responsibility to help alleviate their poverty through upliftment, equipping and transformation!

If we don't provide a practical solution as well as a spiritual solution, we are not fulfilling our divine calling.

2. BE PURPOSE-DRIVEN

Many plans are in a man's mind, but it is the Lord's purpose for him that will stand.

Proverbs 19:21 (Amplified)

Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people).

Ephesians 5:15 (Amplified)

In order for us to be purpose-driven, we must have continuity of vision, we need to stay focused.

Why do we exist?

Our Purpose according to Mark 16:15 is to:

- **Preach** – the Gospel
- **Pastor** – the Converts
- **Prepare** – the Believers
- **Plant** – the People

The Church of the new millennium has huge challenges ahead to keep on track, and we will not be able to do it without a genuine commitment to our vision and purpose!

3. START TO TAKE RISKS

We will never achieve anything by playing it safe all the time. It is time to be bold and give new things a try.

When was the last time that you did something for the first time?

I rather attempt to do something great and fail – than attempt to do nothing and succeed.

Risk takers are courageous people, like Moses who put his life on the line for his people.

[Aroused] by faith Moses, when he had grown to maturity and become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, because he preferred to share the oppression [suffer the hardships] and bear the shame of the people of God rather than to have the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life.

He considered the contempt and abuse and shame [borne for] the Christ (the Messiah Who was to come) to be greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward and away to the reward (recompense).

[Motivated] by faith he left Egypt behind him, being unawed and undismayed by the wrath of the king; for he never flinched but held staunchly to his purpose and endured steadfastly as one who gazed on Him Who is invisible.

Hebrews 11:24-27 (Amplified)

This is the time for the Church to become greater than it has ever been before. This is the time of great opportunity to become everything we should be, and to see how God makes the difference.

We should learn to enjoy challenges and crisis situations because we know that whatever test or trial the devil sends, *all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. What then shall we say to all these things, if God be for us, who can be against us* (Romans 8:28, 31).

4. START TO TRANSCEND MEDIOCRITY

A mediocre person is someone who has stopped growing because he or she has stopped learning!

The more you receive truth, the more you realise how little you know and understand that God has *chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise.*

5. NEVER LET YOUR GIFT TAKE YOU WHERE YOUR CHARACTER CANNOT KEEP YOU.

The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the willful contrariness and crookedness of the treacherous shall destroy them.

Proverbs 11:3 (Amplified)

The way God works is that if you are faithful – a steward in the small things, he will elevate you to greater things.

Character is more than just what we do – character/integrity is who we are – so when you have character in your life, your words and actions line-up!

6. DON'T STAND ALONE IN YOUR MISSION

This is because none of us individually have the Spirit without measure. Only Jesus had the Spirit without measure. We can only walk in the full measure of what God has for us when we do it collectively.

HE WHO wilfully separates and estranges himself [from God and man] seeks his own desire and pretext to break out against all wise and sound judgment.

Proverbs 18:1 (Amplified)

When we work together we have discipline, we are purpose driven and we can team up to meet the needs of the community.

7. EMBRACE CHANGE WITH STABILITY

We must never throw away old truths but add truth to our truth. In this way we will never go from one ditch to another and as believers, we will be secure in the midst of change.

8. FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION

Our ultimate goal is **Mark 16:15**, as the Lord Jesus commanded us: ***Go into all the world and preach the Gospel openly, the good news to every creature.***

Summary

Why not take the future to God, but with the clear understanding that everything – all that we have been clinging to in how we “do church” – is on the altar for God to change.

We will:

- Build with God’s help
- Embracing a new work
- Letting the Spirit lead us into the unprecedented!
- Living our lives on fire for God instead of coasting in comfort

The purpose of the church is to fulfil God’s two commands and the one commission. This means being committed to loving God, loving others and making disciples of all nations. Our effectiveness will be determined by the degree to which we are led by and surrendered to the Holy Spirit. Whatever our strategy for passing on the baton, it must be embraced and implemented first within the local church. We need to return to the foundation worth building on – loving others as God loves us.

- John McElroy